

In the last Office Action, the Examiner objected to claim 19 alleging that it depended from rejected base claim (claim 13). With this Amendment the elements of claim 19 have been incorporated into claim 13, and it is believed that claim 13 is now patentable.

In addition, independent claims 26 and 30 have also been amended incorporating the elements of claim 19 therein. It is believed that independent claims 26 and 30, and their respective dependent claims are now patentable for the same reasons that claim 13 is patentable.

In view of the above, it is respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued. If the Examiner has any questions or if anything can be resolved over the phone, it is requested that the Examiner give applicant's attorney a call at his direct dial number (612) 337-9346.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX: MARKED UP VERSION OF SPECIFICATION AND CLAIM AMENDMENTS

13. (Thrice Amended)

A process for coating particles comprising:

- providing an insert within an upward flowing fluid bed dryer or granulator with a screen across the bottom of the dryer or granulator, the insert comprising a vertically adjustable cylindrical partition located substantially on a vertical axis of the granulator or dryer, a spray nozzle with a heated liquid line and an atomizing gas line connected thereto which is positioned such that a liquid is sprayed within the adjustable cylindrical partition at a selected temperature, the spray nozzle being positioned in a non-heat conducting relation to the bottom screen, the spray nozzle being located substantially on the vertical axis;
- loading the dryer with a bed of particles;
- adjusting the cylindrical partition such that the position of the top of the cylindrical partition is above the bed of particles and product can be removed from the dryer;
- adjusting the spray nozzle such that a spray zone is created within the cylindrical partition;
- providing a gas to fluidize the bed of particles through the bottom screen;
- providing an atomizing gas which is processed through the spray nozzle;
- providing the liquid at the selected temperature in the heated liquid line which is atomized through the spray nozzle;
- contacting the particles with the liquid from the spray nozzle within the cylindrical partition and spray zone;
- drying the particles in an area outside the partition; [and]
- circulating the particles from the fluidized bed up through the cylindrical partition, down through the drying zone and back into the fluidized bed until a selected amount of liquid is coated onto the particles; and
- wherein an inlet air temperature, a product temperature, a spray liquid temperature, a spray nozzle temperature, an atomizing air temperature, a spray liquid line temperature, a coating zone temperature, a fluidizing gas flow, and atomizing gas pressure are monitored.

26. (Twice Amended)

A process for coating particles comprising:

- providing a cylindrical insert whose central axis is disposed in a vertical direction within an upward flowing fluid bed dryer such that fluidized particles within the fluid bed dryer travel upwardly through the insert, and a spray nozzle supplied with a heated liquid sustained at a selected temperature with a heated liquid line such that the liquid is sprayed within the cylindrical insert, and the spray nozzle being disposed in a non-heat conducting relation with regard to a bottom screen within the fluid bed dryer, the spray nozzle being located substantially along the central axis of the cylindrical insert;
- loading the dryer with particles to be coated;
- adjusting the cylindrical partition's vertical position within the fluid bed dryer;



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adjusting the spray nozzle such that a spray zone is created within the cylindrical insert;
fluidizing the particles with a gas stream in an upward direction such that particles travel
through the cylindrical insert;
providing an atomized liquid at the selected temperature through the spray nozzle to coat
the particles within the cylindrical insert;
permitting the particles to dry outside of the cylindrical partition; [and]
recirculating the particles through the cylindrical insert until a selected amount of liquid
is coated onto the particles; and
wherein an inlet air temperature, a product temperature, a spray liquid temperature, a
spray nozzle temperature, an atomizing air temperature, a spray liquid
line temperature, a coating zone temperature, a fluidizing gas flow,
and atomizing gas pressure are monitored.

30. (Twice Amended)

A method for coating particles within a dryer that is capable of
fluidizing a bed of particles, the method comprising:

positioning a cylindrical partition having an axis extending concentrically therein such
that the axis is disposed vertically with respect to upward flow of gas
through the cylindrical partition creating a coating zone within the
partition and above the partition and a drying zone outside of the
coating zone;
positioning a spray nozzle along the axis of the cylindrical partition for spraying a
coating solution onto the particles such that the spray from the nozzle
coats the particles within the partition and in an area above the
partition;
supplying the coating solution to the spray nozzle at a selected temperature via a heated
line;
fluidizing the bed of particles such that particles flow through the partition in an upward
fashion for coating and travel upwardly and outside of the coating
zone and then downwardly settling outside of the partition and coating
zone for drying creating a coating cycle; [and]
repeating the coating cycle until a selected amount of coating is placed onto the particle;
and
wherein an inlet air temperature, a product temperature, a spray liquid temperature, a
spray nozzle temperature, an atomizing air temperature, a spray liquid
line temperature, a coating zone temperature, a fluidizing gas flow,
and atomizing gas pressure are monitored.